

CHAPTER XII

THE NOTION OF BEING

If the main lines of cognitional process have been set down, it remains that certain fundamental and pervasive notions be clarified. Among them, in the first place, is the notion of being. It is a tricky topic and, perhaps, the most satisfactory procedure will be to begin from a definition.

1. A DEFINITION

Being, then, is the objective of the pure desire to know.

By the desire to know is meant the dynamic orientation manifested in questions for intelligence and for reflection. It is not the verbal utterance of questions. It is not the conceptual formulation of questions. It is not any insight or thought. It is not any reflective grasp or judgment. It is the prior and enveloping drive that carries cognitional process from sense and imagination to understanding, from understanding to judgment, from judgment to the complete context of correct judgments that is named knowledge. The desire to know, then, is simply the inquiring and critical spirit of man. By moving him to seek understanding, it prevents him from being content with the mere flow of outer and inner experience. By demanding adequate understanding, it involves man in the self-correcting process of learning in which further questions yield complementary insights. By moving man to reflect, to seek the unconditioned, to grant unqualified assent only to the unconditioned, it prevents him from being content with hearsay and legend, with unverified hypotheses and untested theories.

Finally, by raising still further questions for intelligence and reflection, it excludes complacent inertia; for if the questions go unanswered, man cannot be complacent; and if answers are sought, man is not inert.

Because it differs radically from other desire, this desire has been named pure. It is to be known, not by the misleading analogy of other desire, but by giving free rein to intelligent and rational consciousness. It is, indeed, impalpable but also it is powerful. It pulls man out of the solid routine of perception and conation, instinct and habit, doing and enjoying. It holds him with the fascination of problems. It engages him in the quest of solutions. It makes him aloof to what is not established. It compels assent to the unconditioned. It is the cool shrewdness of common sense, the disinterestedness of science, the detachment of philosophy. It is the absorption of investigation, the joy of discovery, the assurance of judgment, the modesty of limited knowledge. It is the relentless serenity, the unhurried determination, the imperturbable drive of question following appositely on question in the genesis of truth.

This pure desire has an objective. It is a desire to know. As mere desire, it is for the satisfaction of acts of knowing, for the satisfaction of understanding, of understanding fully, of understanding correctly. But as pure desire, as cool, disinterested, detached, it is not for cognitional acts, and the satisfaction they give their subject, but for cognitional contents, for what is to be known. The satisfaction of mistaken understanding,

provided one does not know it as mistaken, can equal the satisfaction of correct understanding. Yet the pure desire scorns the former and prizes the latter; it prizes it, then, as dissimilar to the former; it prizes it not because it yields satisfaction but because its content is correct.

The objective of the pure desire is the content of knowing rather than the act. Still, the desire is not itself a knowing, and so its range is not the same as the range of knowing. Initially in each individual, the pure desire is a dynamic orientation to a totally unknown. As knowledge develops, the objective becomes less and less unknown, more and more known. At any time the objective includes both all that is known and all that remains unknown, for it is the goal of the immanent dynamism of cognitional process and that dynamism both underlies actual attainment and heads beyond it with ever further questions.

What is this objective? Is it limited or unlimited? Is it one or many? Is it material or ideal? Is it phenomenal or real? Is it an immanent content or a transcendent object? Is it a realm of experience, or of thought, or of essences, or of existents? Answers to these and to any other questions have but a single source. They cannot be had without the functioning of the pure desire. They cannot be had from the pure desire alone. They are to be had inasmuch as the pure desires initiates and sustains cognitional process. Thus, if it is true that A is, that A is one, and that there is only A, then the objective of the pure desire is one. But if it is true that A is, that B is, that A is not B, then the objective is many. Which, you ask, is true? The fact that you ask, results from the pure desire. But to reach the

answer, desiring is not enough, answers come only from inquiring and reflecting.

Now our definition was that being is the objective of the pure desire to know. Being, then, is 1) all that is known and 2) all that remains to be known. Again, since a complete increment of knowing occurs only in judgment, being is what is to be known by the totality of true judgments. What, one may ask, is that totality? It is the complete set of answers to the complete set of questions. What the answers are, remains to be seen. What the questions are, awaits their emergence. Meaningless or incoherent or illegitimate questions may be possible, but how they are to be defined, is a further question. The affirmation in hand is that there exists a pure desire to know, an enquiring and critical spirit, that follows up questions with further questions, that heads for some objective which has been named being.

Our definition of being, then, is of the second order. Other definitions determine what is meant. But this definition is more remote for it assigns, not what is meant by being, but how that meaning is to be determined. It asserts that if you know, then you know being; it asserts that if you wish to know, then you wish to know being; but it does not settle whether you know or what you know, whether your wish will be fulfilled or what you will know when it is fulfilled.

Still, though our definition is of the second order, it is not simply indeterminate. For neither the desire to know nor knowing itself are indeterminate. Inasmuch as knowing is determinate, we could say that being is what is to be known by true judgments.

Inasmuch as the desire to know ever goes beyond actual knowledge, we could say that being is what is to be known by the totality of true judgments. Hence, being has, at least, one characteristic: it is all-inclusive. Apart from being there is nothing. Again, being is completely concrete and completely universal. It is completely concrete; over and above the being of any thing, there is nothing more of that thing. It is completely universal; apart from the realm of being, there is simply nothing.

2. AN UNRESTRICTED NOTION

One may wonder just how all-inclusive being is. That wonder may be formulated in a variety of manners. But no matter how it is formulated, no matter whether it can be formulated, it can serve only to show how all-inclusive being is. For the wonder is inquiry. It is the desire to know. Anything it can discover or invent, by that very fact is included in the notion of being. Hence, the effort to establish that being is not all-inclusive must be self-defeating; for at the root of all that can be affirmed, at the root of all that can be conceived, is the pure desire to know; and it is the pure desire, underlying all judgment and formulation, underlying all questioning and all desire to question, that defines its all-inclusive objective.

None the less, it may not be amiss to illustrate this principle concretely. It will be said that there is much we do not know. No doubt, our ignorance is great, but we know that fact by raising questions that we do not answer; and being is defined not only by the answers we give but also by the questions we ask. Next, it will be said that there is much it would be futile for us to try to learn. No doubt, the proximately fruitful field of

inquiry is restricted. But we know that fact by distinguishing between the questions we can hope soon to answer and those that, as yet, we are not prepared to tackle; and being is defined, not only by the questions we can hope to answer, but also by the questions whose answer we have to postpone.

Thirdly, it will be objected by many that they have no desire to know everything about everything. But how do they know that they do not already know everything about everything? It is because so many questions can be asked. Why do they not effectively will to know everything about everything? Because it is so troublesome to reach even a few answers that they are completely disheartened by the prospect of answering all the questions they could ask.

The attack may be made from the opposite flank. The trouble is that the definition of being is too inclusive. Questions can be meaningless, illusory, incoherent, illegitimate. Trying to answer them does not lead to knowledge of anything. Now, no doubt, there are mistaken questions that lead nowhere. But mistaken questions are formulated questions. Being has been defined, not as the objective of formulated questions, but as the objective of the pure desire to know. Just as that desire is prior to any answer and it itself is not the answer, so too, it is prior to any formulated question and it itself is not a formulation. Moreover, just as the pure desire is the intelligent and rational basis from which we discern between correct and incorrect answers, so also it is the intelligent and rational basis from which we discern between valid and mistaken questions. In brief, the pure desire to know, whose

objective is being, is the source not only of answers but also of their criteria, and not only of questions but also of the grounds on which they are screened. For it is intelligent inquiry and reasonable reflection that just as much yield the right questions as the right answers.

More fundamental misgivings may arise. If one pleases, one may define being as what is to be known through the totality of true judgments. But is being really that? Might it not be something entirely different? The questions arise. They may be valid or mistaken. If they are mistaken, they are to be ignored. If they are valid, then our misgivings are without foundation. For the being that might be totally different, turns out to be exactly what we are talking about. For we ask whether it might be; and the being we are talking about, is the being we ask about.

Again, might there not be an unknowable? If the question is invalid, it is to be ignored. If the question is valid, the answer may be "Yes" or "No". But the answer, "Yes", would be incoherent, for then one would be knowing that the unknowable is; and the answer, "No", would leave everything knowable and within the range of being.

Other doubts may arise, but instead of chasing after them one by one, it will be better to revert to our initial theorem. Every doubt that the pure desire is unrestricted serves only to prove that it is unrestricted. If you ask whether X might not lie beyond its range, the fact that you ask proves that X lies within its range. Or else, if the question is meaningless, incoherent, illusory, illegitimate, then X turns out to be the mere

nothing that results from aberration in cognitional process.

Not only, then, is judgment absolute, not only does it rest upon a grasp of the unconditioned, not only does reflection set the dichotomy, Is it or is it not? But at the root of cognitional process there is a cool, detached, disinterested desire to know and its range is unrestricted. Being is the anything and everything that is the objective of that desire.

3. A SPONTANEOUS NOTION

If we have explained what we mean by being, we must now ask what the notion of being is.

In the first place, a distinction has to be drawn between the spontaneously operative notion and, on the other hand, theoretical accounts of its genesis and content. The spontaneously operative notion is invariant; it is common to all men; it functions in the same manner no matter what theoretical account of it a man may come to accept. On the other hand, theoretical accounts of the content and genesis of the notion are numerous; they vary with philosophic contexts, with the completeness of a thinker's observations, with the thoroughness of his analysis. First, we shall give our account of the spontaneously operative notion, and then we shall add a few notes on other theoretical accounts of it.

On the supposition of our analysis of cognitional process, it is easy enough to conclude that the spontaneously operative notion of being has to be placed in the pure desire to know. For, first of all, man are apt to agree that things are, whether or not we know them and, moreover, that there are many things that are known only incompletely or even not at all. The notion of being, then, extends beyond the known. Secondly, being is known

in judgment. It is in judgment that we affirm or deny and, until we are ready to affirm or deny, we do not yet know whether or not any X happens to be. Still, though being is known only in judging, the notion of being is prior to judging. For prior to any judgment there is reflection, and reflection is formulated in the question, Is it? That question supposes some notion of being and, strangely enough, it is prior to each instance of our knowing being. Not only then, does the notion of being extend beyond the known but also it is prior to the final component of knowing when being is actually known. Thirdly, there are objects of thought. I can think of a horse and, no less, I can think of a centaur. I can think of the best available scientific opinion on any subject and, not less, I can think of all the previous opinions that in their day were the best available on the same subject. In one sense, they are all equivalent, for as long as one is merely thinking, merely considering, merely supposing, one deals merely with the conditioned and it makes no difference whether or not its conditions are fulfilled. Thinking, then, prescind from existing. But if it prescind from existing, does it not prescind from being; and if it prescind from being, is not all thinking about nothing? The trouble with this argument is that thinking also prescind from not existing. If I think of a centaur or of phlogiston, I prescind from the fact that they do not exist; hence, if prescinding from existing is prescinding from being, prescinding from non-existence is prescinding from not being; if prescinding from being proves that I am thinking of nothing, then prescinding from not being proves that I am thinking of something.

Now this type of consideration has led many thinkers

to suppose that being is one thing and existing is another, that horses and centaurs, electrons and phlogiston, equally are, but horses and electrons exist while centaurs and phlogiston do not exist. Still that conclusion does not satisfy the facts, for apart from the oddity of asserting that the non-existent is, there is the oversight of the dynamism of cognitional process. In a sense, thinking prescind from existing and not existing, for it is not thinking but judging that determines whether or not anything exists. In another sense, thinking does not prescind from existing and not existing, for thinking is purposive; we think to get our concepts straight; we wish to get our concepts straight that we may be able to judge; so far from prescinding from existing and not existing, thinking is for the purpose of determining whether or not what is thought does exist.

It follows that the notion of being goes beyond the merely thought, for we ask whether or not the merely thought exists. No less, it follows that the notion of being is prior to thinking, for were it not, then thinking could not be for the purpose of judging, for the purpose of determining whether or not the merely thought exists. The notion of being, then, is prior to conception and goes beyond it; and it is prior to judgment and goes beyond it. That notion must be the immanent, dynamic orientation of cognitional process. It must be the detached and unrestricted desire to know as operative in cognitional process. Desiring to know is desiring to know being; but it is merely the desire and not yet knowing. Thinking is thinking being; it is not thinking nothing; but thinking being is not yet knowing it. Judging is a complete increment in knowing; if correct, it is a knowing of

being; but it is not yet knowing being, for that is attained only through the totality of correct judgments.

Still, how can an orientation or a desire be named a notion. A foetal eye is orientated towards seeing; but a foetal eye does not see and it has no notion of seeing; a notion arises only in so far as understanding discerns future function in present structure. Hunger is orientated towards food and eating; it is a desire; it lies within empirical consciousness; but a notion arises only in so far as the orientation of hunger is understood. Purposive human action is orientated towards some end or product; cognitional elements provide the rule and guide of such action; but the cognitional elements are prior to the action; they are constituted, not by the action itself, but by the planning that precedes it.

It remains that none of these instances is exactly parallel to the relation between the desire to know and cognitional process. For the desire to know is not unconscious, as is the foetal eye, nor empirically conscious, as is hunger, nor a consequence of intellectual knowledge, as are deliberation and choice. The desire to know is conscious intelligently and rationally; it is inquiring intelligence and reflecting reasonableness. Simply as desire, it is orientation without, as yet, involving any cognitional content or notion. Still intelligence, as obverse, looks for the intelligible, as reverse. Reasonableness, as obverse, looks for the grounded, as reverse. More fundamentally, the looking for, the desiring, the inquiring-and-reflecting is an obverse that intelligently and rationally heads for an unrestricted objective named being. Were that heading unconscious, there would be an

orientation towards being but there would be no desire to know being and no notion of being. Were that heading empirically conscious, there would be an orientation towards being and a felt desire to know being, but there would be no notion of being. In fact, the heading is intelligent and rational, and so there is not only an orientation towards being, not only a pure desire to know being, but also a notion of being.

Let us try to catch this notion, this intention of being, in the act. We speak of abstraction, and commonly we mean a direction of attention to some aspects of the given with a concomitant neglect of other aspects. The geometer considers the circle as a plane figure obeying a certain rule; he disregards the size, the color, the inexactitude of the figure he draws or imagines; still more so does he disregard other and more loosely connected aspects of the given.. But that is not all. He disregards all other questions in geometry, all other departments of mathematics, all other fields of science, all other human occupations to which he could turn his hand. He considers only the circle. He abstracts from everything else. He does so intelligently, for though the objective of his desire is unrestricted, still he can move towards it only by concentrating on one element at a time. Again, as intelligence abstracts, so reflection prescind. If I am to judge whether or not this is a typewriter, I have to prescind from all that is not relevant to that issue. I have to know all that is relevant. If I were a relativist, I would have to know the universe to know all that is relevant to that single judgment. Even though I am not a relativist, even though I find that many conditioned proposi-

tions become virtually unconditioned on the fulfilment of a manageable number of conditions, still this restriction of the relevant is accompanied by an acknowledgment of a universe of irrelevancies.

Finally, as intelligence concentrates on the significant to abstract from all else, as reflection concentrates on the relevant to prescind from all else, so further questions and further issues arise neither as a surprise nor as a new beginning. The abstracting and the prescinding were provisional; they were only moments in a larger process. Nor is that larger process merely the object of introspective analysis. Immanent within it and operative of it lies an intelligent and rational consciousness that unrestrictedly intends a correspondingly unrestricted objective named being, or the all, or everything about everything, or the concrete universe. Just as the notion of the intelligible is involved in the actual functioning of intelligence, just as the notion of the grounded is involved in the actual functioning of reasonableness, so the notion of being is involved in the unrestricted drive of inquiring intelligence and reflecting reasonableness.

4. AN ALL-PERVASIVE NOTION

Hence it is that the notion of being is all-pervasive. It underpins all cognitional contents. It penetrates them all. It constitutes them as cognitional.

It underpins all cognitional contents. Without the pure desire to know, sensitive living would remain in its routine of perception and conation, instinct and habit, emotion and action. What breaks that circuit and releases intellectual activity is the wonder Aristotle described as the beginning of all science and philosophy. But that wonder is intelligent inquiry. It selects

data for insight and by that selecting it underpins even the empirical component in our knowing. Still more obviously all ideas and all concepts are responses to the desire to understand, and all judgments are responses to the demand for the unconditioned.

Secondly, the notion of being penetrates all cognitional contents. It is the supreme heuristic notion. Prior to every content, it is the notion of the to-be-known through that content. As each content emerges, the "to-be-known through the content" passes without residue into the "known through that content". Some blank in universal anticipation is filled in, not merely to end that element of anticipation, but also to make the filler a part of the anticipated. Hence, prior to all answers, the notion of being is the notion of the totality to be known through all answers. But, once all answers are reached, the notion of being becomes the notion of the totality known through all answers.

Thirdly, the notion of being constitutes all contents as cognitional. Experiencing is only the first level of knowing; it presents the matter to be known. Understanding is only the second level of knowing; it defines the matter to be known. Knowing reaches a complete increment only with judgment, only when the merely experienced has been thought and the merely thought has been affirmed. But the increment of knowing is always completed in the same fashion. Experience is a kaleidoscopic flow. Objects of thought are as various as the inventiveness of human intelligence. But the contribution of judgment to our knowing is ever a mere "Yes" or "No", a mere "is" or "is not". Experience is for inquiring into being. Intelligence is for thinking out being.

But by judgment being is known, and in judgment what is known is known as being. Hence knowing is knowing being, yet the known is never mere being, just as judgment is never a mere "Yes" apart from any question that "Yes" answers.

5. THE CORE OF MEANING

As the notion of being underpins all contents, and penetrates them, and constitutes them as cognitional, so also it is the core of meaning.

Distinguish 1) sources of meaning, 2) acts of meaning, 3) terms of meaning, and 4) the core of meaning.

Any element of knowledge may serve as a source of meaning. Hence, sources of meaning include data and images, ideas and concepts, the grasp of the unconditioned and judgment and, no less, the detached and unrestricted desire to know.

Acts of meaning are of three kinds. They are 1) formal, 2) full, 3) instrumental. The formal act of meaning is an act of conceiving, thinking, considering, defining, supposing, formulating. The full act of meaning is an act of judging. The instrumental act of meaning is the implementation of a formal or of a full act by the use of words or symbols in a spoken, written, or merely imagined utterance.

Terms of meaning are whatever is meant. They are formal or full. Formal terms of meaning are what is conceived, thought, considered, defined, supposed, formulated. Full terms of meaning are what is affirmed or denied.

Now the all-inclusive term of meaning is being, for apart from being there is nothing. Inversely, the core of all acts of meaning is the intention of being.

Thus, any given judgment pertains to a context of judgments, and it is from the context that the meaning of the given judgment is determined. But why is the meaning of the given judgment a function of a context of other judgments? Because any judgment is but an increment in a whole named knowledge; because the meaning of the judgment is but an element in the determination of the universal intention of being.

Again, judgments may be true or false. The true judgment affirms what is and denies what is not. In the true judgment there is harmony between what is intended and what is meant. But in the false judgment there is conflict between intention and meaning. The false judgment as a judgment intends being; it intends to affirm what is and to deny what is not. But the false judgment as false is a failure to carry out its intention as a judgment. It affirms what is not and denies what is. It means not what is but only what would be, were it not false but true; again, in its negative form, it means, not what is not, but what would not be, were it not false but true.

Perhaps it is this internal conflict that has led some to the conclusion that a false judgment is meaningless. But such a conclusion seems astoundingly false. Were the false judgment meaningless, there would be nothing to be false. The false judgment is false precisely because it means a state of affairs that is the opposite of the state one intends to affirm, namely, the state that truly is.

On the level of conception there is a similar but less conspicuous contrast between meaning and its core, which is the

intention of being. Horses and unicorns, electrons and phlogiston, may be equally valid as formal terms of meaning. One can suppose them, or consider them, or define them, and that is all that is required of the formal term of meaning. Still, horses and electrons seem preferable as formal terms to unicorns and phlogiston. Absolutely, one can think of the latter, but there is something idle, something superfluous, something futile about such thinking. The reason for this is that thinking is a moment in the unfolding of the pure desire to know; though the thought as thought is merely a formal term of meaning, though the unicorn is just as valid a formal term as is the horse, still we do not merely think. Our thinking is purposive. It is a tentative determination of the all-inclusive notion of being. It not merely thinks the object of thought but also anticipates the object of judgment. It not merely means the formal term of meaning but also looks ahead to the full term. Because the unicorn and phlogiston are known to be unsuccessful determinations of being, they are formal terms in which the core of meaning, the intention of being, has become uninterested.

Finally, in view of the prevalence of empiricist theories of meaning, a few words may be added on instrumental acts. Ordinary instrumental acts, such as spoken or written words or symbols, offer no special interest. But the empiricist emphasizes ostensive acts, such as demonstrative pronouns and adjectives and, of course, gestures. The reason for this emphasis may be readily grasped if one distinguishes between the function of gestures in any theory of meaning and the function gestures acquire in virtue

of empiricist affirmations. In any theory of meaning an ostensive act is an instrumental act of meaning; it presupposes formal or full acts of meaning, inasmuch as one knows what one means; and it refers to formal or full terms of meaning, inasmuch as all meaning refers to a meant. Again, in any theory of meaning the ostensive act is operative inasmuch as it succeeds in drawing another's attention to a sensible source of meaning, so that by drawing on that source, by understanding, and by reflecting he may reach the appropriate formal or full term of meaning that is meant. But in empiricist opinion the ostensive act has a third function; for the empiricist identifies the valid field of full terms of meaning (i.e. the universe of being) with the range of sensible presentations; hence, for the empiricist, the ostensive act not merely indicates a source of meaning but also a full term of meaning. Whether or not this empiricist modification of the general theory of meaning is correct, will depend on the question whether or not the set of propositions that enunciate empiricism are to be pronounced true or false.

6. A PUZZLING NOTION

Before going on to consider other accounts of the notion of being, it will be well to deal with a series of puzzles that seem to have a common root. Just as other concepts, the notion of being is represented by instrumental acts that are the name, being, and the verb, to be. By mistaken analogy it is inferred that the notion of being resembles concepts in their other aspects. But, in fact, the notion of being is unique; for it is the core of all acts of meaning; and it underpins, penetrates, and goes beyond all other

cognitional contents. Hence, it is idle to characterize the notion of being by appealing to the ordinary rules or laws of conception. What has to be grasped, is its divergence from such rules and laws and, to descend to details, a series of questions will be briefly considered.

First, does the notion of being result from the expression or formulation of an act of understanding?

Other concepts result from some insight either into the use of their names, or into things-for-us, or into things-themselves. The notion of being penetrates all other contents, and so it is present in the formulation of every concept. It cannot result from an insight into being, for such an insight would be an understanding of everything about everything, and such understanding we have not attained. It is, as has been said, the orientation of intelligent and rational consciousness towards an unrestricted objective.

Secondly, has the notion of being an essence, or is it an essence?

As other concepts result from acts of understanding, as acts of understanding consist in grasping what, from some viewpoint, is essential, other concepts are essences. Moreover, as other concepts are complete prior to the question for reflection that asks whether or not any such essence is, other concepts are merely essences and prescind from existence or actuality. But the notion of being does not result from an understanding of being; it does not rest on the grasp of what from some viewpoint is essential; and so the notion of being is not the notion of some essence.

Further, the notion of being remains incomplete on the level of intelligence; it moves conception forward to questions for reflection; it moves beyond single judgments to the totality of correct judgments; and so it does not prescind from existence and actuality.

Thirdly, can the notion of being be defined?

It cannot be defined in any ordinary manner, for it underpins and penetrates and goes beyond the content of every definition. However, it does possess certain definite characteristics. For it regards the unrestricted objective of our knowing, the concrete universe, the totality of all that is. Moreover, it is determinate inasmuch as the structure of our knowing is determinate, and so it can be defined, at a second remove, by saying that it refers to all that can be known by intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation. On the other hand, such definition does not settle which questions are appropriate to our knowing or which answers are correct. It leaves the materialist free to claim that to be is to be material. Equally, it allows the empiricist to claim that to be is to be experienced, the idealist to insist that to be is to be thought, the phenomenalist to explain that to be is to appear, and so forth.

Fourthly, how can one notion have such diverse meanings?

Because it is determinate only at a second remove. The notion of being is the notion of what is to be determined by correct judgments. If the strategic correct judgments are that matter exists and nothing but matter exists, then the materialist is right. If the strategic correct judgments are that there is

appearance and nothing but appearance, then the phenomenalist is right. Similarly, if the propositions enunciating other positions are correct, then being is as such positions declare. The notion of being does not determine which position is correct; it merely determines that the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed is being.

Fifthly, has the notion of being any presuppositions or properties?

Other concepts are determinate essences and so they have presuppositions and implications. If X is not an animal, then X is not a man. If X is a man, then X is mortal. But the notion of being is not the notion of some essence. It becomes determined only as correct judgments are made, and it reaches its full determination only when the totality of correct judgments are made. However, the making of judgments is a determinate process, and one does not have to make all judgments to grasp the nature of that process. It is this fact that makes cognitional theory a base of operations for the determination of the general structure of the concrete universe.

Sixthly, is the notion of being univocal or analogous?

Concepts are said to be univocal when they have the same meaning in all applications, and they are said to be analogous when their meaning varies systematically as one moves from one field of application to another. The notion of being may be named univocal inasmuch as it underpins all other contents; for in that respect it is the one desire to know and it regards one unres-

tricted objective that is the concrete universe. Again, the notion of being may be named analogous inasmuch as it penetrates all other contents; in this fashion it is said that esse viventium est vivere; the being of living things is being alive. Finally, the notion of being may be said to be neither univocal nor analogous, for this distinction regards concepts, while the notion of being both underpins and goes beyond other contents. It may be noted, however, that what frequently enough is meant by the analogy of being is precisely what we mean by saying that the notion of being underpins, penetrates, and goes beyond other contents.

Seventhly, is the notion of being abstract?

For a notion to be abstract it must possess a determinate content and abstract from other contents. The notion of being abstracts from nothing whatever. It is all-inclusive. Its content is determined by the totality of correct judgments.

However, there is a still larger totality of possible judgments; within it there are strategic sets that serve to define the general character of the concrete universe in accord with the varying viewpoints of different philosophies. Such strategic sets have already been illustrated, e.g., there is matter and nothing but matter, or there is appearance and nothing but appearance, or there is thought and nothing but thought, or the structure of our knowing is determinate and so the structure of being proportionate to our knowing is determinate.

Now in virtue of such strategic sets of judgments it is possible to distinguish between the general character of the concrete universe, and, on the other hand, the concrete universe

in all its details. Clearly enough, a determination of the general character of the concrete universe is an abstract view of being, for it considers not the whole of being as a whole but the whole of being as fixed by some strategic part or aspect.

In this fashion one reaches a general meaning for the phrase, being as being. But to determine what being as being is in any particular philosophy, one has to examine the strategic judgments of that philosophy; and to determine what is the correct meaning of being as being, one has to examine the strategic judgments of the correct philosophy.

Rightly, is the notion of being a genus or species or difference?

Inasmuch as the notion of being is prior to all other cognitional contents, it is like a genus awaiting division by the addition of difference. But inasmuch as the notion of being anticipates, penetrates, and includes all other contents, it differs from the genus, which is a determinate content quite distinct from the content of its differences. Thus, being can be divided into red, green, and blue beings; and color can be divided into red, green and blue colors. But the concept of red has a content or element of content absent in the concept of color, and so it differentiates the genus by adding to it from without. On the other hand, the concept of red has no content and no element of content absent in the notion of being; it cannot differentiate being by adding to it from without for, without being, apart from being, there is simply nothing. Finally, the notion

of being not only underpins and penetrates all other contents but also complements them inasmuch as the "Yes" of judgment constitutes them as actually unconditioned and so endows them with an actual objective reference.

Ninthly, when one thinks without as yet judging, either one is thinking of being or of nothing. If one is thinking of being, then one does not need to judge in order to know being. If one is thinking of nothing, then all thought must be identical, for it always deals with the same nothing.

When one thinks, conceives, considers, supposes, or defines, one does so with respect to being. Hence we accept the first alternative. What one thinks of, is being. Still, to think of being is one thing; to know being is another. To think of being is to operate on the second level of cognitional process; it is to be on the way towards a complete increment of knowing; but it is not to have reached anything more than a partial increment that can be completed only by judging.

Tenthly, the notion of being is the notion of the concrete universe. But universal propositions are abstract and, none the less, they may be affirmed in judgment. Either, then, judgment is not about being, or else being is not concrete.

The notion of being is the notion of the concrete in the same manner as it is of the universe. It is of the universe because questions end only when there is nothing more to be asked. It is of the concrete, because until the concrete is reached, there remain further questions. Hence, it is not the single judgment but the totality of correct judgments that equates with the con-

crete universe that is being.

The problem of the universal proposition may be met by distinguishing between the formal and the material aspects of the analytic proposition. Formally an analytic proposition is 1) a conditioned, 2) linked to its conditions by the laws governing the coalescence of the partial instrumental meanings of words into the complete instrumental meaning of the sentence, and 3) having its conditions fulfilled by the meanings or definitions of the words it employs. Materially analytic propositions differ inasmuch as the terms and relations employed 1) may be known to occur in concrete judgments of fact, 2) may not be known to occur in concrete judgments of fact, or 3) may be known not to occur in concrete judgments of fact.

Formally every analytic proposition regards the concrete universe inasmuch as syntactical laws are factual aspects of the coalescence of partial into complete instrumental meanings. Materially some analytic propositions regard the concrete universe either in fact, as in the first case, or tentatively, as in the second.

7.

THEORIES OF THE NOTION OF BEING

A distinction has been drawn between the spontaneously operative notion of being, common to all men, and theoretical accounts of that notion, which differ from one philosophy to another. Our own theoretical account has been given. It remains that further clarifications be sought by contrasting it with some of the views that have been proposed by others.

For Parmenides, Being was one, without origin or end, homogeneous and indivisible, immovable and unchangeable, full and

spherical. See F.M.Cornford, Plato and Parmenides, London, 1939. pp.28 ff

The genesis of this position would seem to be as follows. Parmenides eliminated the alternative of blank negation, and so was left with the alternative of affirming. Affirmation may be reasonably grounded, and then it is the Way of Truth, or it may lack reasonable grounds, and then it is the Way of Seeming. Parmenides arrived at his notion of being by following the way of Truth.

What does the choice of reasonable affirmation imply being to be? If one accepts any affirmation, one has also to accept the correct statement of the meaning, suppositions, and consequences of that affirmation. Every judgment stands in need of a context, and without affirming the context the affirmation of the initial judgment loses its meaning. Thus, reasonable affirmation has to be the affirmation of a set of judgments, which form a single whole, and so the affirmed is a corresponding single whole.

What is this single whole that is affirmed to be? The proper answer is to set to work inquiring and reflecting with respect to the whole of experience. The whole to be known corresponds to the totality of correct judgments. But Parmenides took a shorter route. He did not advert to the fact that being admits no more than a definition of the second order. He treated the notion of being as though it were a concept like "man" or "circle". He supposed that it was a determinate essence with determinate suppositions and determinate consequences. Because being is, it cannot be not-being, nor becoming, nor ceasing to be. Inversely, neither not-being nor becoming nor ceasing to be are being, and so they

must be nothing. Again, being cannot be differentiated; what differs from being, is not being; and what is not being, is nothing. Again, since there are no differences within being, there can be no motion or change within being. Finally, emptiness, the void, is nothing; being is not nothing, and so it cannot be emptiness; therefore, it is full. Etc.

Plato's Forms were projections into a noetic heaven of what transcends ordinary, sensitive experience. The Forms, then, are the ideal objectives of 1) aesthetic experience, 2) the insights of the mathematician and physicist, 3) the unconditioned of reflective understanding, 4) moral conscience, and 5) intelligently and reasonably purposive living. They are a confused bag and, as it seems, the Parmenides marks the turning point in which the necessity of drawing distinction and setting up a more comprehensive theory becomes evident.

In the Sophistes the philosopher is described as heading through rational discourse for the Idea of Being (254 a). It is acknowledged that the isolation of each Form from all the others would eliminate the possibility of discourse which lies in the conjunction of distinct Forms or categories (259 a). There is, then, a comingling or participation among the Forms (259 a) and there is a Form of Not-being just as much as of the Great or the Fair (258 c).

The inadequacy of this position lies in its failure to distinguish between the level of intelligence and the level of reflection. Without that distinction, the unconditioned of judgment is surreptitiously attributed to mere objects of thought to transform them into eternal Forms and, inversely, the "is" and "is not"

by which judgment posits the unconditioned can have a meaning only if they too are supposed to be Forms. There results an aggregate of Forms, each radically and eternally distinct from all the others. Still they are to be reached only through rational discourse, and if discourse is to refer to them, then there must be a commingling on their part to correspond to the synthetic elements in discourse. What is this commingling of distinct Forms? It would seem better, before trying to answer so difficult a question, to determine whether or not the question really arises. In fact, we would argue, it does not. Until judgment is reached, the increment of knowing is incomplete. Before judgment is reached, the synthetic element is already present in knowing. All that judgment adds to the question for reflection is the "Yes" or "No", the "is" or "is not". What is affirmed or denied may be a single proposition or the whole set of propositions constitutive of a hypothesis, for either may be regarded as conditioned and either may be grasped as virtually unconditioned. Judgment, then, is not a synthesis of terms but the unconditioned positing of such a synthesis. Corresponding to judgment there is not a synthesis of Forms but the absolute of fact. Platonism is magnificent in its devotion to the pure desire to know. But its failure to grasp the nature of judgment resulted in a deviation from the concrete universe of fact to an ideal heaven.

Aristotle clung to the Platonist definition of judgment as a synthesis (Sophistes 263; De Anima III, 6, 430a, 26). Still, he distinguished sharply between questions for intelligence (What is

it? Why is it so?) and questions for reflection (Is it? Is it so?) (Post.Anal., II, 1, 89b 22ff) with the result that he had a sane and clear-headed respect for fact without reaching its exact implications. He would not have agreed with the empiricist who places fact, not in the virtually unconditioned, but in the sensible fulfilment through which the conditioned becomes grasped as unconditioned. But you would put him a question he had not adequately considered, if you asked him whether the virtually unconditioned was a third component in our knowing or, on the other hand, merely a rubber-stamp of approval attached to the conceptual unification of its sensible and intelligible components.

This unresolved ambiguity appears both in his methodology and in his metaphysics. For him the supreme question was the question of existence. Still it was a question that was already answered in descriptive knowing; that answer had to be presupposed in the search for explanation; and the function of explanation was simply to determine what things are and why they have the properties they possess. The intrinsically hypothetical character of explanation and its need of a further, verifying judgment of existence were overlooked. Again, Aristotle asks, what being is. That question expresses the demand for understanding, for knowledge of the cause. Quite naturally, Aristotle answers that the cause of being is its immanent form (Met. Z. 17). Primarily, being is what is constituted by a substantial form or, on second thoughts, by the combination of substantial form and matter. Secondly, being is what is constituted by accidental forms; "white", "heat", "strength" are not nothing though they are not simply what is

meant by being. Again, being is the collection of existing substances with their properties and incidental modifications; but though being denotes the factually existent, still existing is no more than the reality of substantial forms along with their mainly immanent suppositions and consequences. (See S. Mansion, Le jugement d'existence chez Aristote, Louvain-Paris 1946; J. Owens, The Doctrine of Being in Aristotle's Metaphysics, Toronto Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1951.

Quite plainly this position is going to give rise to a problem of the unity of the notion of being. Aristotle broke with his Parmenidean and Platonist antecedents by identifying being with the concrete universe as, in fact, it is known to be. But Aristotle did not break with their supposition that the notion of being was a conceptual content. He asked what being is. In other words, he supposed that being is some conceptual content and he demanded what act of understanding occurred prior to the formulation of that content. But, as we have seen, being can be defined by us only indirectly, and so Aristotle was unable to assign any specific act of understanding that resulted in the conceptual content of being. However, the conspicuous type of acts of understanding is the insight that grasps intelligible form emergent in sensible data; and so Aristotle assigned the ontological principle, form, as the ground of being in things and the cognitional act of grasping form as the insight from which originates the conceptual content, being.

In this fashion, mediaeval Scholasticism inherited a problem. Is the notion of being one or is it many? If it is one,

is its unity the unity of a single content or is it the unity of a function of variable contents?

Henry of Ghent seems to have held that the unity of being is merely the unity of a name. God is and I am. In both cases, being is affirmed. But the realities affirmed are simply disparate.

Duns Scotus contended that, besides the unity of the name, there is also a unity of content. If no part or aspect of you is by identity a part or aspect of me, still neither of us is nothing. There is, then, some minimal conceptual content that positively constitutes what is expressed negatively by the negation of nothing. What it is, cannot be declared by appealing to other positive contents, for it is one of the ultimate atoms of thought; it is simply simple. Still one can approach it by noting that Socrates supposes man, man supposes animal, animal supposes living material substance, and substance supposes a something that is even less determinate and less exclusive. The concept of being is the concept with least connotation and greatest denotation. Moreover, it is essentially abstract. What it denotes, is never just being, but either the infinite or some finite mode of being, where the mode is to be viewed not as some further and distinct content but rather as an intrinsic variation of basic, indeterminate content. (See A.B. Wolter, The Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus, Washington, Catholic University of America, 1946; A. Marc, L'Idée de l'être chez saint Thomas et dans la scolastique postérieure, Arch. de Phil. X, 1933, 31-49).

Thomas de Vio Caietanus was no more satisfied with the Scotist view, than Scotus himself had been satisfied with that of Henry of Ghent. If a single name without a single meaning will not

do, neither will a single meaning that as single seems restricted to the order of thought. Accordingly, Cajetan worked out his theory of the unity of a function of variable contents. Just as "double" denotes indifferently the relation of 2 to 1, 4 to 2, 6 to 3, and so forth, so "being" denotes indifferently the proportion of essence to existence or, as we might say, the proportion between what is formulated by thought and what is added to it by judgment. On this position the notion of being always includes some conceptual content but it may include any; again, being in act will never be known without some affirmative judgment, but the affirmation is never mere affirmation nor the affirmation of an indeterminate content: it is always the affirmation of some determinate content, and any affirmable, determinate content will do. In brief, Cajetan can grant that atomic conceptual contents are many and disparate; he can deny the Scotist view that there is some common factor, some positive counterpart of "not nothing", of absolutely universal denotation; and yet by his theory of the unity of a function of variable contents, he can possess not only a single name, being, and a single notion of being, but also a single notion that is applicable to anything that in fact, is known to exist. (A.Marc., Op. cit. 50-56).

It is to be noted that, if Scotus stands for the Parmenidean and Platonist suppositions from which Aristotle did not free himself, Cajetan stands for the main orientation of Aristotelian thought but succeeds in doing so only by going beyond it. If conceptual contents are products of acts of understanding that grasp forms emergent in sensible presentations, one may well expect such contents to be a disparate multiplicity. Hence,

Aristotle answered the question, What is being? not by assigning a conceptual content but by assigning the ground of being in the general object of understanding, form. Since forms are many, it follows that the ground of being is a variable; further, it follows that if the notion of being is to be one, then its unity will have to be the unity of a function of variable contents. What, then, are the variables within the single function? One of them is form. At first sight, the obvious candidate for the other is matter. Still, if it were selected, it would follow that Aristotle's immaterial substance would not belong to the universe of being. To maintain the Aristotelian position in its integrity, it was necessary to make the second variable the virtually unconditioned grasped by reflective understanding and affirmed in judgment; this in the general case is existence, actuality, fact, that combines with pure form or the compound of form and matter to constitute a being in act.

Brilliant as it is, Cajetan's position has its shortcomings. It envisages an aggregate of concrete beings each of which is constituted by essence and existence. It offers as the unity of the notion of being the relation or proportion of what is conceived to its being affirmed. But it does not elucidate how that relation emerges in our knowledge as a single notion; and it gives no clue to account for the fact that by "being", we mean, not only this and that being, but everything, totality, the universe. In brief, Cajetan seems to have been more interested in explaining the unity of the notion of being than the notion itself.

To complete Cajetan's position, it is necessary to go back to his master, St Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas, as for Aristotle,

human intellect is a potential omnipotence, a potens omnia facere et fieri. But Aquinas could exploit that affirmation in a manner that would have startled Aristotle.

First, he recognized an unrestricted desire to know. As soon as we learn of God's existence, we wish to understand His nature. To achieve such understanding is beyond the power of our natural capacity, yet in such achievement lies our spontaneously desired beatitude. (I, 12, 1, ff.; I-II, 3, 8; 5,5).

Secondly, the unrestrictedness native to intellect grounds the affirmation that the object of intellect has to be being. Because intellect is potens omnia fieri, its object is ens. (I, 79, 7, c). Being and everything are equivalent notions.

Thirdly, for the same reason, an intellect fully in act must be infinite and uncreated act. Any created intellect must in some manner be potential, and our intellects start from a zero of potentiality. (I, 79, 2 c. CG. II, 98).

Fourthly, none the less, being is per se and naturally known to us (CG. II, 83, #31) and it cannot be unknown to us. (De Ver. 11, 1, 3m). Avicenna had interpreted Aristotle's agent intellect as some separate immaterial substance. Aquinas found it immanent within us; the light of intelligence, which is in us, performs the functions Aristotle attributed to agent intellect, and, moreover, Aristotle compared agent intellect to a light. (CG. II, 77, #5). Augustine had advanced that our knowledge of truth originated, not without but within us, yet not simply within us, but in some illumination in which we consulted the eternal

grounds and norms of things. Aquinas explained that we consult the eternal ground and norms, not by taking a look at them, but by having within us a light of intelligence that is a created participation of the eternal and uncreated light. (I, 84, 5, c.)

Fifthly, though being is naturally known, though our intellects are created participations of uncreated light, still, there is no valid ontological argument for the existence of God (I, 2, 1c.). God's knowledge of being is a priori; He is the act of understanding that grasps everything about everything; but we advance towards knowledge by asking the explanatory question, Quid sit? and the factual question, An sit?

In such positions it is easy to discern not only the justification of Cajetan's theory of analogy but also the elements which that theory tends to overlook. Prior to conception and to judgment, there is the dynamic orientation of intelligent and rational consciousness with its unrestricted objective. This orientation is man's capacity to raise questions and thereby to generate knowledge. Immanent within man, it is a spark of the divine. Cognate to God, still it is knowing, not in act but in sheer potency. As it is the common root of intelligent grasp and reasonable judgment, so also it is the root of the relation or proportion between the conceived essence and the affirmed existence. As its objective is unrestricted, so it regards not only single compounds of essence and existence but also the universe, totality, infinity.

It has been noted how Cajetan saves the main orientation of Aristotelian thought by going beyond it and, though this involves still more metaphysics, it may be added how Aquinas does so.

Aristotle asked what being is. But "What?" is just a disguised "Why?" What the question really asks for is the ground of being, and so Aristotle answered by indicating substantial form as the immanent cause of each being. But since his substantial form was not some unique and separate Platonic Idea, his answer gave rise to the problem of the unity of the notion of being. Now if Aquinas were to ask the same question, his answer would be that God is the ground of being; God's own being is self-explanatory and necessary; by the Aristotelian theorem of the identity of the knower and known, God's being is identical with God's understanding; by that single act of understanding, God understands himself, and so he understands his own power, and so he understands all that by that power could be produced. God, then, is the act of understanding that grasps everything about everything. The content of the divine act of intellect is the idea of being and so, precisely because our intellects are potential, they can define being only at a second remove as whatever is to be known by intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation.

Again, both the position of Cajetan and the position of Scotus stand within the field accessible to the logician. By going behind that field to its dynamic basis, one can find the ground not only of Cajetan's proportion but also of Scotus' minimal content. What is it that is common to every conceptual content? It is that all are underpinned and penetrated by the pure desire's intention of its unrestricted objective. The Scotist notion of being is reached by distinguishing between the penetrating intention of being and the penetrated conceptual content; from instance to

instance the conceptual content differs; but in every instance, there is the anticipating, enveloping, penetrating intention, and that is what the Scotist alleges to be a common factor in all contents.

Still if the intention of being is a common factor in all conceptual contents, it is also a dynamic factor that goes beyond them. To set aside this dynamism is to nullify not only what lies beyond the conceptual contents but also the intention of being itself. In a famous little treatise, Aquinas had remarked, Essentia dicitur secundum quod per eam et in ea ens habetlesse. It is in and through essences that being has existence. Hence, being apart from essence is being apart from the possibility of existence; it is being that cannot exist; but what cannot exist is nothing, and so the notion of being apart from essence is the notion of nothing.

It will be worth grasping why Scotus felt he could escape this conclusion while Hegel felt that he could not avoid it. Scotus felt he could avoid it because he conceived knowing, not as process that reaches a complete increment in judgment, but as taking a look. When Scotus separated his notion of being from other conceptual contents, he also separated that notion from the possibility of judgment. Still that separation did not imply for Scotus a separation from the possibility of knowing, for he viewed knowing, not as ultimately constituted by judging, but as essentially a matter of looking. He would grant that there was no look in which the seen was solely the common content that he named being. But he would insist that that common content was included in the

object of every intellectual intuition, and still more would insist that a look at nothing, an intuition of nothing, was absurd. In brief, for the Scotist, being is an aspect of the real at which intellect looks; the theory of modes and the distinction between quidditative and denominative being are efforts to blow this aspect up to the dimensions of the whole. For the Thomist, on the other hand, being is the whole of what intelligence anticipates; it is the objective of an unrestricted, dynamic orientation; it is whatever intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation will determine; and so the notion of being is open to all the incomplete and partial moments from which cognitional process suffers without ever renouncing its all-inclusive goal.

Five hundred years separate Hegel from Scotus. As will appear from our discussion of the method of metaphysics, that notable interval of time was largely devoted to working out in a variety of manners the possibilities of the assumption that knowing consists in taking a look. The ultimate conclusion was that it did not and could not. If the reader does not himself accept that conclusion as definitive, certainly Hegel did and so Hegel could not take advantage of the Scotist escape from the identification of the notion of being with the notion of nothing. But Hegel was boxed on the other side as well. He effectively acknowledged a pure desire with an unrestricted objective. But he could not identify that objective with a universe of being, with a realm of factual existents and occurrences. For being as fact can be reached only in so far as the virtually unconditioned is reached; and as Kant had ignored that constitutive component of judgment,

so Hegel neither rediscovered nor re-established it. The only objective Hegel can offer the pure desire is a universe of all-inclusive concreteness that is devoid of the existential, the factual, the virtually unconditioned. There is no reason why such an objective should be named being. It is, as Hegel named it, an Absolute Idea. It is the all-inclusive summit of the pure desire's immanent dialectical process from position through opposition to sublation that yields a new position to recommence the triadic process until the Absolute Idea is reached.

Now if the intention that is the pure desire has neither a Scotist reality on which it can look back, nor a Thomist universe of existents, to which it can look forward, none the less, in psychological fact it underpins and penetrates all conceptual contents. It constitutes, then, a common factor in all conceptual contents; it can be distinguished from them, for it is identical with none of them; yet, as distinguished from them, it becomes indistinguishable from the notion of nothing; for the only ground of the latter distinction would be that it looked back or forward to something.

It is interesting to note that, if the foregoing succeeds in fixing fundamental features of Hegel's thought, by that very fact it shows that on Hegelian criteria, Hegelianism is mistaken. Hegel's System is not afraid of facts; it explains any fact alleged against it by showing it to be a manifestation of an incomplete viewpoint included within the System. Hegel's System is not afraid of contradictions; it explains any contradiction alleged against it by revealing what opposed and incomplete viewpoints, accounted

for by the System, yield the alleged contradictory terms. The only thing the System has to fear is that it itself should be no more than some incomplete viewpoint and, in fact, that is what it is. Hegel aimed at rehabilitating the speculative reason that Kant had dethroned. But the basis of the Kantian attack was that the unconditioned is not a constitutive component of judgment. A complete rehabilitation of human rational consciousness will show that the unconditioned is a constitutive component of judgment. This, Hegel did not do. His viewpoint is essentially the viewpoint of a thinker who does not and cannot regard the factual as unconditioned, who cannot acknowledge any factually fixed points of reference, who cannot advance by distinguishing the definitively certain, the more or less probable, and the unknown. Hegel's range of vision is enormous; indeed, it is unrestricted in extent. But it is always restricted in content, for it views everything as it would be if there were no facts. It is a restricted viewpoint that can topple outwards into the factualness of Marx or inwards into the factualness of Kierkegaard. It is a viewpoint that is transcended automatically by anyone that, in any instance, grasps the virtually unconditioned and affirms it.

For this reason, we placed the discussion of Self-affirmation prior to the discussion of the Notion of Being. Self-affirmation is the affirmation of the knower, conscious empirically, intelligently, rationally. The pure desire to know is a constituent element both of the affirming and of the self that is affirmed. But the pure desire to know is the notion of being as it is spontaneously operative in cognitional process and being itself is the to-be-known towards which that process heads.

CHAPTER XIII

THE NOTION OF OBJECTIVITY

Human knowing is cyclic and cumulative. It is cyclic inasmuch as cognitional process advances from experience through inquiry and reflection to judgment only to revert to experience and recommence its ascent to another judgment. It is cumulative, not only in memory's store of experiences and understanding's clustering of insights, but also in the coalescence of judgments into the context named knowledge or mentality.

This complexity of our knowing involves a parallel complexity in our notion of objectivity. Principally the notion of objectivity is contained within a patterned context of judgments which serve as implicit definitions of the terms, object, subject. But besides this principal and complete notion, there also are partial aspects or components emergent within cognitional process. Thus, there is an experiential aspect of objectivity proper to sense and empirical consciousness. There is a normative aspect that is contained in the contrast between the detached and unrestricted desire to know and, on the other hand, merely subjective desires and fears. Finally, there is an absolute aspect that is contained in single judgments considered by themselves inasmuch as each rests on a grasp of the unconditioned and is posited without reservation.

1. THE PRINCIPAL NOTION

Principally, the notion of objectivity is contained in a patterned context of judgments. For one may define as object any A, B, C, D, where, in turn, A, B, C, D, . . . are defined by the correctness of the set of judgments:

A is; B is; C is; D is;

A is neither B nor C nor D nor . .

B is neither C nor D nor

C is neither D nor

Again, one may define a subject as any object, say A, where it is true that A affirms himself as a knower in the sense explained in the chapter on self-affirmation.

The bare essentials of this notion of objectivity are reached if we add to the judgments already discussed, viz., I am a knower, This is a typewriter, the further judgment that I am not this typewriter. An indefinite number of further objects may be added by making the additional appropriate positive and negative judgments. Finally, in so far as one can intelligently grasp and reasonably affirm the existence of other knowers besides oneself, one can add to the list of the objects that also are subjects.

The properties of the principal notion of objectivity have now to be noted. First, as has already been remarked, the notion resides in a context of judgments; without a plurality of judgments that satisfy a definite pattern, the notion does not emerge. Secondly, there follows an immediate corollary; the principal notion of objectivity, as defined, is not contained in any single judgment and, still less, in any experiential or normative factor

that occurs in cognitional process prior to judgment. Thirdly, the validity of the principal notion of objectivity is the same as the validity of the set of judgments that contain it; if the judgments are correct, then it is correct that there are objects and subjects in the sense defined, for the sense defined is simply the correctness of the appropriate pattern of judgments.

Fourthly, to turn to certain broader aspects of the principal notion, judgments in the appropriate pattern commonly are made and commonly are regarded as correct. It follows that commonly people will know objects and subjects and that commonly they will be surprised that any doubt should be entertained about the matter. On the other hand, it does not follow that people will commonly be able to give a lucid account of their knowledge of objects and subjects. For the lucid account employs the somewhat recondite art of implicit definition and, at the same time, people are apt to jump to the conclusion that so evident a matter as the existence of objects and subjects must rest on something as obvious and conspicuous as the experiential aspect of objectivity. Hence, on the one hand, they will say that the typewriter is an object because they see it or feel it; on the other hand, however, they will admit that would not consider the typewriter an object if they knew it to be true either that there was no typewriter at all or that what they named a typewriter was identical with everything else.

Fifthly, the principal notion of objectivity is closely related to the notion of being. Being is what is to be known through the totality of correct judgments. Objectivity in its principal

sense is what is known through any set of judgments satisfying a determinate pattern. In brief, there is objectivity if there are distinct beings, some of which both know themselves and know others as others. Moreover, the notion of being explains why objectivity in its principal sense is to be reached only through a pattern of judgments. For the notion of being becomes determinate only in so far as judgments are made; prior to judgment, one can think of being but one cannot know it; and any single judgment is but a minute increment in the process towards knowing it. Again, being is divided from within; apart from being there is nothing; it follows that there cannot be a subject that stands outside being and looks at it; the subject has to be before he can look; and, once he is, then he is not outside being but either the whole of it or some part. If he is the whole of it, then he is the sole object. If he is only a part, then he has to begin by knowing a multiplicity of parts (A is; B is; A is not B) and add that one part knows others (I am A).

Sixthly, the principal notion of objectivity solves the problem of transcendence. How does the knower get beyond himself to a known? The question is, we suggest, misleading. It supposes the knower to know himself and asks how he can know anything else. Our answer involves two elements. On the one hand, we contend that, while the knower may experience himself or think about himself without judging, still he cannot know himself until he makes the correct affirmation, I am, and then we contend that other judgments are equally possible and reasonable, so that through experience, inquiry, and reflection there arises knowledge of other

objects both as beings and as being other than the knower. Hence, we place transcendence, not in going beyond a known knower, but in heading for being within which there are positive differences and, among such differences, the difference between object and subject. Inasmuch as such judgments occur, there is in fact, objectivity and transcendence; and whether or not such judgments are correct, is a distinct question to be resolved along the lines reached in the analysis of judgment.

2. ABSOLUTE OBJECTIVITY

Besides the principal notion of objectivity, there also are the partial aspects of experiential, normative, and absolute objectivity. It will be convenient to begin from the last of the three.

The ground of absolute objectivity is the virtually unconditioned that is grasped by reflective understanding and posited in judgment. The formally unconditioned, which has no conditions at all, stands outside the interlocked field of conditioning and conditioned; it is intrinsically absolute. The virtually unconditioned stands within that field; it has conditions; it itself is among the conditions of other instances of the conditioned; still its conditions are fulfilled; it is a de facto absolute.

Because the content of the judgment is an absolute, it is withdrawn from relativity to the subject that utters it, the place in which he utters it, the time at which he utters it. Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon was a contingent event occurring at a particular place and time. But a true affirmation of that event is an eternal, immutable, definitive validity. For if it is true that he did cross, then no one whatever at any place or time can

truly deny that he did.

Hence, it is in virtue of absolute objectivity that our knowing acquires what has been named its publicity. For the same reason that the unconditioned is withdrawn from relativity to its source, it also is accessible not only to the knower that utters it but also to any other knower.

Again, it is the absolute objectivity of the unconditioned that is formulated in the logical principles of identity and contradiction. The principle of identity is the immutable and definitive validity of the true. The principle of contradiction is the exclusiveness of that validity. It is, and what is opposed to it, is not.

Further, absolute objectivity pertains to single judgments as single. As has been argued, the principal notion of objectivity is constituted only but a suitable constellation of judgments. But each judgment in such a constellation is an absolute and, moreover, it is an absolute in virtue of its own affirmation of the unconditioned. The validity of the principal notion is a derived validity resting on the set of absolutes it involves. But the absolute aspect of objectivity has its ground in the single judgment to which it pertains. It is quite compatible with the affirmation that there is but one being, that there is no object except the affirming subject; accordingly, the absolute aspect of objectivity does not imply any subject-object relation; it constitutes the entry of our knowing into the realm of being but, by itself, it does not suffice to posit, distinguish, and relate beings. However, this insufficiency arises, not from some defect of absolute

objectivity, nor because the posited beings, their distinction, and their relations are not all unconditioned, but because several judgments are needed to posit, to distinguish, and to relate.

It is important not to confuse the absolute objectivity of any correct judgment with the invariance proper to the expression of universal judgments. Both universal and particular judgments, if correct, are absolutely objective. But the former are expressed invariantly because the expression is independent of variations in spatio-temporal reference frames, while the latter are expressed relatively because their expression does not enjoy such independence. However, the variation of the expression presupposes and reveals the absolute objectivity of what is expressed. Because "I am here now" has absolute objectivity, there is an identical truth to be repeated only by employing the different words, "He was there then".

Again, absolute objectivity has no implications of an absolute space or of an absolute time. If it is true that space is, then what is absolute is the truth and not the space. Whether the space is absolute or relative, is a further question. If it is true that space consists of an infinite set of immovable and empty places, then space is absolute. If it is true that space is not such a set, then space is relative. Which is correct? At least, the issue cannot be settled by appealing to the fact that a true judgment posits an unconditioned.

Further, as Zeno argued, to affirm that something or other is, does not imply that it is within space. If it did, one could ask whether or not the space (within which it is) is. If not, that space is nothing and to affirm things within nothing is meaningless. If, however, it is, then since "to be" is "to be within space", the

question recurs; if "X is" means "X is within space", it would seem to follow that "space is" means that "space is within space"; the second space cannot be identical with the first, else it would not contain it; and if it is distinct, then it can be only by being within a further space, and so on indefinitely.

The same argument holds for being within time. If "to be" is "to be at some time", then either there is time or there is not. If there is not, then "to be at some time" is really a mere "to be". If there is time, then it has to be at some time, and that at some time, and so forth to infinity.

Interpretations of being or of absolute objectivity in terms of space and time are mere intrusions of imagination. Absolute objectivity is simply a property of the unconditioned; and the unconditioned, as such, says nothing about space or time. If one's imagination makes the use of the preposition "within" imperative, then one may say that every judgment is within a context of other judgments and that every unconditioned is within a universe of being. Then "space is" by being within the universe of being, and "time is" by being within the universe of being, where to "be within the universe of being" is to "be unconditioned along with other instances of the unconditioned".

3.

NORMATIVE OBJECTIVITY

The second of the partial aspects of objectivity is the normative. It is objectivity as opposed to the subjectivity of wishful thinking, of rash or excessively cautious judgments, of allowing joy or sadness, hope or fear, love or detestation, to interfere with the proper march of cognitional process.

The ground of normative objectivity lies in the unfolding of the unrestricted, detached, disinterested desire to know.

Because it is unrestricted, it opposes the obscurantism that hides truth or blocks access to it in whole or in part. Because it is detached, it is opposed to the inhibitions of cognitional process that arise from other human desires and drives. Because it is disinterested, it is opposed to the well-meaning but disastrous reinforcement that other desires lend cognitional process only to twist its orientation into the narrow confines of their limited range.

Normative objectivity is constituted by the immanent exigence of the pure desire in the pursuit of its unrestricted objective. A dynamic orientation defines its objective. No less it defines the means towards attaining its objective. Not only does the pure desire head for the universe of being, but also it does so by desiring to understand and by desiring to grasp the understood as unconditioned. Hence, to be objective, in the normative sense of the term, is to give free rein to the pure desire, to its questions for intelligence, and to its questions for reflection. Further, it is to distinguish between questions for intelligence that admit proximate solutions and other questions of the same type that, at present, cannot be solved. Similarly, it is to distinguish between sound questions and, on the other hand, meaningless questions, or incoherent or illegitimate questions. For the pure desire not only desires; it desires intelligently and reasonably; it desires to understand because it is intelligent and it desires to grasp the unconditioned because it desires to be reasonable.

Upon the normative exigences of the pure desire rests the validity of all logic and all methods. A logic or method is not

an ultimate that can be established only by a hullabalou of starry-eyed praise for Medieval Philosophy or for Modern Science, along with an insecure resentment of everything else. Logic and method are intelligent and rational; their grounds are not belief nor propaganda nor the pragmatic utility of atom-bombs and nylon stockings; their grounds are the inner exigence of the pure desire to know. They are to be accepted in so far as they succeed in formulating that dynamic exigence; and they are to be revised in so far as they fail.

In various manners this dependence has already been noted. Thus, the logical principles of identity and contradiction result from the unconditioned and the compulsion it exercises upon our reasonableness. The principle of excluded middle possesses ultimate but not immediate validity; it possesses ultimate validity because, if a judgment occurs, it must be either an affirmation or a denial; it does not possess immediate validity, for with respect to each proposition, rational consciousness is presented with the three alternatives of affirmation, of negation, and of seeking a better understanding and so a more adequate formulation of the issue. Again, the procedures of empirical method in its classical and statistical phases have been accounted for by the pure desire's movement towards understanding, towards an understanding that regards not only things as related to us by our senses but also things as related functionally among themselves, towards an understanding that presupposes data to admit systematization in the classical phase and, in other respects, to be non-systematic and so necessitate a statistical phase. Finally, precepts regarding judgment can

be derived from the general requirement of the unconditioned and from the special circumstances of different kinds of judgments which may be primitive or derived, theoretical or concrete, descriptive or explanatory, certain or probable.

4. EXPERIENTIAL OBJECTIVITY

The third partial aspect of objectivity is the experiential. It is the given as given. It is the field of materials about which one inquires, in which one finds the fulfilment of conditions for the unconditioned, to which cognitional process repeatedly returns to generate the series of inquiries and reflections that yield the contextual manifold of judgments.

Further, the given is unquestionable and indubitable. What is constituted by answering questions, can be upset by other questions. But the given is constituted apart from questioning; it remains the same no matter what the result of questioning may be; it is unquestionable in the sense that it lies outside the cognitional levels constituted by questioning and answering. In the same fashion the given is indubitable. What can be doubted is the answer to a question for reflection; it is a "Yes" or a "No". But the given is not the answer to any question; it is prior to questioning and independent of any answers.

Again, the given is residual and, of itself, diffuse. It is possible to select elements in the given and to indicate them clearly and precisely. But the selection and indication are the work of insight and formulation, and the given is the residue that remains when one subtracts from the indicated 1) the instrumental act of meaning by which one indicates, 2) the concepts expressed

by that instrumental act, 3) the insights on which the concepts rest. Hence, since the given is just the residue, since it can be selected and indicated only through intellectual activities, of itself it is diffuse; the field of the given contains differences, but in so far as they simply lie in the field, the differences are unassigned.

Again, the field of the given is equally valid in all its parts but differently significant in different parts.

It is equally valid in all its parts in the sense that there is no screening prior to inquiry. Screening is the fruit of inquiry. It takes place once inquiry has begun.

It is differently significant in different parts in the sense that some parts are significant for some departments of knowledge and other parts for other departments. The physicist has to disregard what he merely imagines, merely dreams, merely derives from his personal equation. The psychologist has to explain imagination, dreaming, and personal equations. Hence, once inquiry begins, the first step is the screening that selects the relevant field of the given.

We are employing the name, "given", in an extremely broad sense. It includes not only the veridical deliverances of outer sense but also images, dreams, illusions, hallucinations, personal equations, subjective bias, and so forth. No doubt, a more restricted use of the term would be desirable, if we were speaking from the limited viewpoint of natural science. But we are working at a general theory of objectivity and so we have to acknowledge as given not only the materials into which natural

science inquires but also the materials into which the psychologist or methodologist or cultural historian inquires.

There is a profounder reason. Our account of the given is extrinsic. It involves no description of the stream of sensitive consciousness. It involves no theory of that stream. It discusses neither the contribution of the empirically conscious subject nor the contribution of other "outside" agents. It simply notes that reflection and judgment presuppose understanding, that inquiry and understanding presuppose materials for inquiry and something to be understood. Such presupposed materials will be unquestionable and indubitable, for they are not constituted by answering questions. They will be residual and diffuse, for they are what is left over once the fruits of inquiry and reflection are subtracted from cognitive contents.

Now such unquestionable and indubitable, residual and diffuse materials for inquiry and reflection must be regarded as equally valid in all their parts. Were they all invalid, there could be neither inquiry nor reflection, and so no reasonable pronouncement that they are invalid. Were some valid and others invalid, there would have to be a reasonably affirmed principle of selection; but such a principle can be grasped and reasonably affirmed only after inquiry has begun. Prior to inquiry there can be no intelligent discrimination and no reasonable rejection.

There is still a deeper reason. Why is the given to be defined extrinsically? Because all objectivity rests upon the unrestricted, detached, disinterested desire to know. It is that desire that sets up the canons of normative objectivity. It is

that desire that gives rise to the absolute objectivity implicit in judgment. It is that desire that yields the constellation of judgments that implicitly define the principal notion of distinct objects in the universe of being, some of which know others. Experiential objectivity has to rest on the same basis, and so the given is defined, not by appealing to sensitive process, but by the pure desire regarding the flow of empirical consciousness as the materials for its operation.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NOTION

An account has been given of a principal notion of objectivity and of its three partial aspects, the experiential, the normative, and the absolute. However, there also exists subjectivity, and the reader may be inclined to find in the present section a full confirmation of a suspicion that he has for some time entertained, namely, that we have failed to place our finger on what is objective, that we are confusing with the objective either in part or in whole what really is subjective. To deal with this problem will call for a further and rather complex investigation but, before we go on to it, let us note the more general characteristics of the notion of objectivity that has just been outlined.

First of all, despite its complexity, it can be the notion of objectivity that common sense presupposes and utilizes. The principal notion is implicit within a suitable pattern of judgments; it arises automatically when the judgments that happen to be made fall within such a pattern. The absolute aspect is implicit in judgment for, as we have argued at length, judgment affirms the unconditioned that reflective understanding grasps. The

normative aspect is not any set of rules that has to be invented; it results from the intelligent inquiry and the reflective reasonableness that are the unfolding of the pure desire to know. Finally, the experiential aspect, while it may appear to do violence to common sense expectations, is fully in accord with scientific practice which claims to be an extension and refinement of common sense.

Secondly, the notion of objectivity that has been outlined is a minimal notion. There arises the question, What is objectivity? If the answer is to be intelligent and reasonable, then the pure desire and its normative exigencies must be respected. Moreover, there must be materials into which intelligence inquires and on which reasonableness reflects. Further, if there is a definitive answer, the unconditioned and so the absolute will be attained. Finally, if the question and answer have a point, there will be other judgments which, if they occur in an appropriate pattern, will yield the principal notion.

Thirdly, our notion of objectivity begs no questions. Just as our notion of being does not decide between empiricism and rationalism, positivism and idealism, existentialism and realism, but leaves that decision to the content of correct judgments that are made, so also our notion of objectivity is equally open. If judgments occur in the appropriate pattern, then it involves a plurality of knowing subjects and known objects. If in effect, there is only one true judgment, say, the affirmation of the Hegelian Absolute Idea, our notion of objectivity undergoes no formal modification. If true judgments are never reached, there arises